

**ARCHAEOLEG CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY
FIELD OPERATIONS**

**EXTENSION TO THE
MIND CENTRE**

at

**132B PRIORY STREET
CARMARTHEN**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING
BRIEF**

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for

The Mind Association

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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
THE MIND CENTRE, 132B PRIORY STREET, CARMARTHEN
DAT Project Record 32490**

CONTENTS	PAGE
Summary	3
Acknowledgements	3
1. Introduction	4
2. Summary of watching brief results	5
Appendix 1:Site Records	7
Appendix 2:Catalogue of watching brief archive	9
Sources	10
Figure 1. Location Plan	11

SUMMARY

An extension was proposed for the MIND Centre at 132B Priory Street, Carmarthen. An archaeological watching brief was required because the site was located within the centre of the Roman town of Carmarthen, *Moridunum*. An archaeological assessment, Project Record Number 32489, and watching brief, Project Record Number 32491, were previously undertaken in 1991 during the construction of the MIND Centre. At that time, *in situ* Roman deposits were encountered at a depth of 0.80m below ground level.

The existing MIND Centre conservatory was dismantled, the footings were removed and the foundation trench excavated to a depth of 1.00m below present ground level, to accommodate the extension. The site stratigraphy comprised a series of garden soils and demolition spreads ranging from early post medieval through to the present day. Two late post medieval stone walls, remains of an earlier building, and associated demolition infill were recorded at the far south-western end of the site. A cobbled surface, probably a yard, contemporary with the post medieval building was identified to the north west. There were no Roman deposits evident throughout the current watching brief.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was prepared by B. Allen, Project Officer, Archaeolog CAMBRIA Archaeology Field Operations. The fieldwork was carried out by B. Allen. The author is grateful to the on-site staff of Bassett and MacGregor for all their help during the watching brief.

INTRODUCTION

PROJECT COMMISSION

MIND Association commissioned Bassett and MacGregor to carry out the construction work and Archaeoleg CAMBRIA Archaeology to undertake the archaeological watching brief during September 1997.

SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

The project has been undertaken in accordance with the Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1994) specifications. The watching brief aimed to monitor all exposed sections, record any archaeological features uncovered during excavation and to produce a report.

ABBREVIATIONS

Sites contained in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR). All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using the open-ended numbering system employed by Cambria Archaeology Field Operations (eg. 001; 010; 100; 1000). The project archive is indexed and catalogued according to the National Monument Record (NMR) guidelines.

SUMMARY OF WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

THE SITE

The site is located at 132B Priory Street, Carmarthen (NGR SN41612034). The extension is confined to a limited area, 12m by 8m, between the MIND Shop and the MIND Centre.

The Roman town of *Moridunum* is the earliest evidence of human activity within Carmarthen. The site lies within the centre of the Roman town, located on the eastern side of modern Carmarthen. Previous excavations have been concentrated around the perimeter of the Roman town. Our knowledge of Roman Carmarthen is solely based upon archaeological evidence, predominantly obtained through excavations. Documentary evidence suggests this area has not been subject to development since the Roman period up to the post medieval period.

METHODOLOGY

Preliminary documentary research was undertaken, using the Dyfed Sites and Monuments Record to obtain information on the historical background of the area. The site was visited during the excavation of the foundation trench, and a watching brief carried out throughout this operation. Archaeological features and deposits were recorded using an open-ended numbering system. Photographs and site notes were taken during the fieldwork.

FIELDWORK RESULTS

The site of the new extension included a garden and a small conservatory, which was dismantled. The excavation for the foundations was 12 metres by 8 metres, carried out to a depth of one metre.

Several areas of the site were disturbed from previous excavations for various service trenches and the conservatory footings for the MIND Centre.

The excavation revealed the remains of two five-course sandstone walls (009, 018) and a cobbled surface (016), both dating from the late post medieval period. There was also a sequence of garden soils (001, 005, 012, 013, 014 & 015). The basal layer (005) contained pottery sherds, which date this deposit from the early post medieval period. Modern demolition infill (002) was encountered at the south west corner of the site between the two walls (009, 018). No evidence of Roman occupation was encountered to this depth within the prescribed area.

CONCLUSIONS

Post medieval and modern features were recorded within the site stratigraphy. The building represented by the two walls (009, 018) as contemporary with the cobbled surface, and was probably still in use into this century, hence the modern infill (002). The earliest deposit recorded on site accumulated during the early post medieval period possibly whilst this area functioned as the 'Town Fields' as depicted on the Street Plan of Carmarthen in 1786.

The absence of Roman archaeology suggests that it either exists at a level below that of the recent excavation, or that it has been destroyed as a result of the post medieval activity.

It is likely to prove to be the latter, because evidence of Roman archaeology was found during nearby excavations at a depth of 0.80m below the surface.

APPENDIX ONE: SITE RECORDS

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

001 = Layer, topsoil/garden soil, sandy clay, moderately compacted, dark brown, homogeneous, maximum depth 0.33m

002 = Layer, demolition material, mortar, sand, brick, stone, roof slate fragments, cement and coal fragments 90%, maximum depth 0.34m

003 = Cut, patio foundation, maximum depth 0.10m

004 = Fill of 003, stone chipping base and concrete paving slabs, maximum depth 0.10m

005 = Layer, garden soil, silty clay, moderately compacted, mid grey brown, sub-angular gravel 50%, bone 5%, decayed mortar fragments 5%, small brick fragments 10%, pottery 5%, not based, depth 0.58m

006 = Cut, service trench, steep sided, 1.00m wide tapering slightly towards the base, not based, depth 0.60m

007 = Fill of 006, dark black brown sandy clay overlying chippings and two pipelines

008 = Cut, wall foundation trench, unclear in section, approximately 0.50m wide, almost near vertical sides, not based, depth 0.50m

009 = Structure, wall, substantial faced sandstone, five course, lime mortar bonding with coal fragments, foundation base comprised thin, horizontal sandstone slabs layed in a dark brown silty clay matrix. Length 1.33m, width 0.50m, height 0.75m not based and continues into section.

010 = Cut, service trench, near vertical sides, width 1.00m, depth undetermined not seen in section.

011 = Fill of 010, same sequence as 007 with three service pipelines.

012 = Layer, garden soil, silty sandy loam, dark black brown, angular stone 10%, roof slate fragments 30%, decayed mortar fragments 10%, coal fragments 30%, brick fragments 30%.

013 = Layer, demolition spread, sandy clay, compact, light red brown, coal fragments 30%, small brick fragments 30%, roof slate fragments 20%, pottery 5%, maximum depth 0.04m

014 = Layer, garden soil/demolition spread, silty clay, moderately compact, mid grey brown, inclusions same as 013, maximum depth 0.10m

015 = Layer, demolition spread, sandy clay, compact, light red brown, inclusions same as 013, cockles 10%, maximum depth 0.03m.

016 = Structure, cobble surface, upturned river gravel cobbles, relatively uniform size 0.07m x 0.03m in a compact, mid brown, very sandy clay matrix.

017 = Cut, wall foundation trench, near vertical sides, not based, depth 0.50m.

018 = Structure, wall, identical construction and bonding material as 009. Length 1.05m, width 0.50m and height 0.66m, not based and continues into section.

APPENDIX TWO: CATALOGUE OF WATCHING BRIEF ARCHIVE

The project archive has been indexed and catalogued according to National Monument Record (NMR) categories and contains the following:

- A.** Copy of final report
- B.** Site records, including context record sheets and site notebook.
- C.** Site photographs (monochrome and colour slide, 35mm)
- I.** Archive report and draft copies of final report
- M.** Miscellaneous correspondence

There is no material in catagories **D, E, F, G, H, J, K, L** and **N**.

The archive is currently held by Archaeoleg CAMBRIA Archaeology Field Operations, Llandeilo, as project number 32490.

SOURCES

OS	1891	1st Edition OS 6 inch XXXIX.NE
Lewis T	1786	Street Plan of Carmarthen
James T	1980	<i>CARMARTHEN An Archaeological and Topographical Survey</i> , DAT report, Llandeilo.

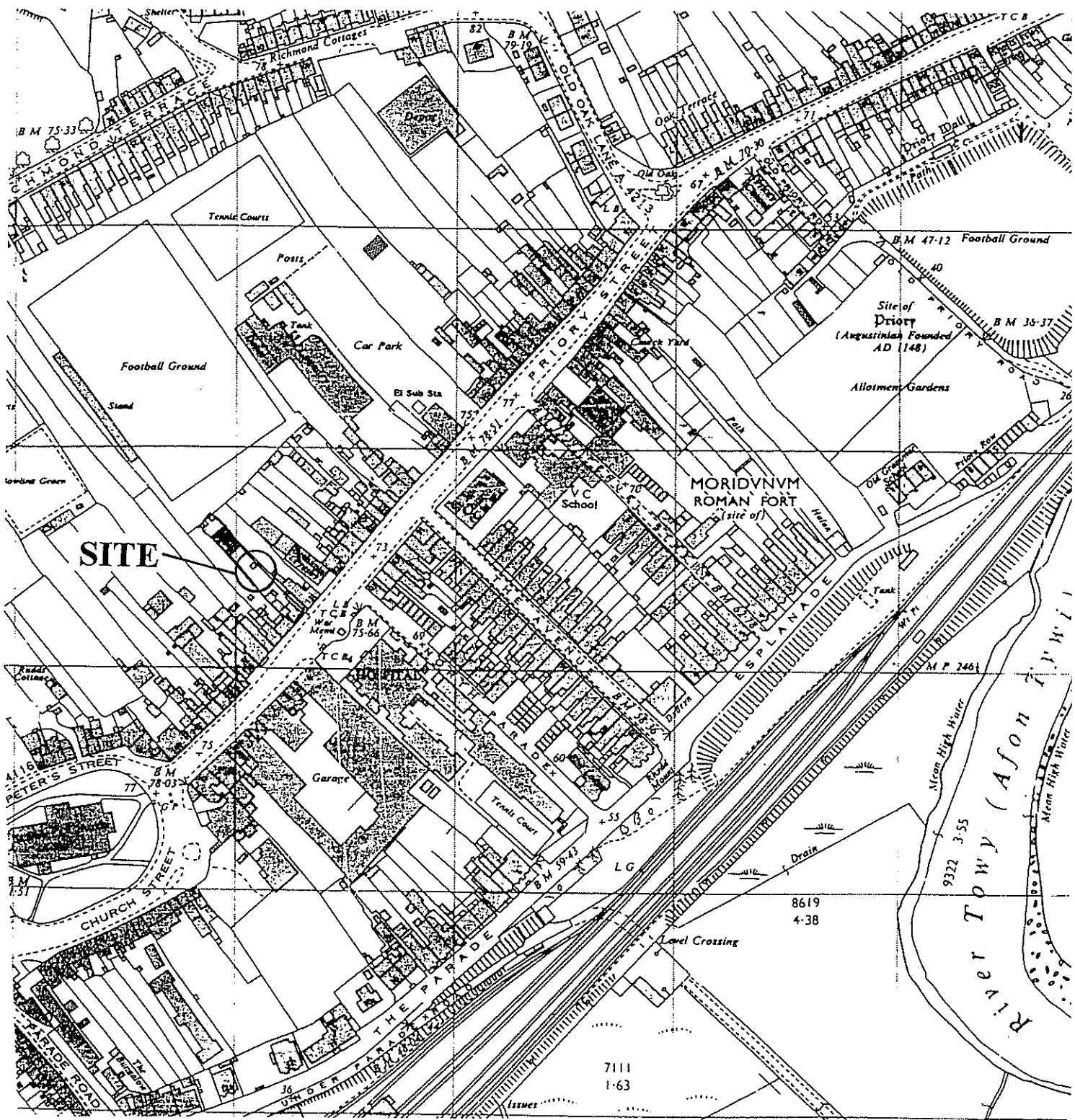


Figure 1. Location Plan